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Saint Louis (Mo.) City Plan Commission

St. Louis after the war

St. Louis, Mo.

1918

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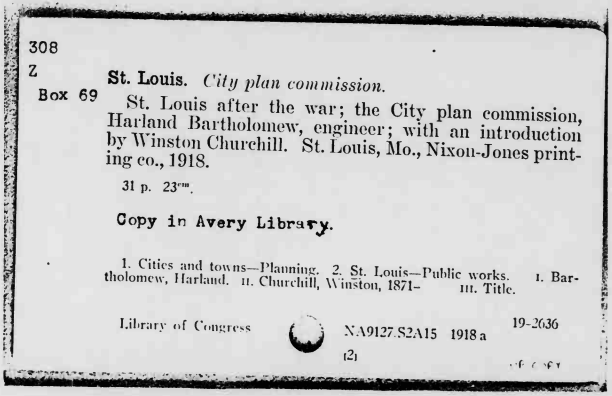

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St. Louis. *City plan commission.*

St. Louis after the war; the City plan commission, Harland Bartholomew, engineer; with an introduction by Winston Churchill. St. Louis, Mo., Nixon-Jones printing co., 1918.

31 p. 23cm.

Copy in Avery Library.

1. Cities and towns—Planning. 2. St. Louis—Public works. I. Bartholomew, Harland. II. Churchill, Winston, 1871– III. Title.

Library of Congress NA9127.S2A15 1918a 19-2636
[2]

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TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mm REDUCTION RATIO: 11:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 2-11-97 INITIALS: PB

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ST. LOUIS AFTER THE WAR

INTRODUCTION

By

WINSTON CHURCHILL

ST. LOUIS
AFTER THE WAR

THE CITY PLAN COMMISSION
HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW
ENGINEER

With an introduction by
WINSTON CHURCHILL

NIXON-JONES PRINTING CO.
ST. LOUIS, MO.
1918

9 March, 1920 - C.R.W.

OFFICE OF THE CITY PLAN COMMISSION

OF ST. LOUIS

To the Honorable
Board of Public Service,
City of St. Louis, Mo.

December 10, 1918.

Gentlemen:

At the September meeting of the City Plan Commission the engineer was instructed to prepare a report on public work in St. Louis. This action was taken in anticipation of the end of the war, though so abrupt a termination of hostilites was not then expected. It was our thought that irrespective of the date when the war would end, St. Louis should be prepared to undertake at once necessary public work and in so doing provide as well a constructive remunerative employment for many of the 60,000 St. Louisans that have entered the government service, should occasion for their employment arise.

Upon presentation of the report by the engineer it occurred to the Commission that an introduction to this report, written by some one capable of interpreting the spirit of St. Louis, would serve to point more clearly the desirability of early and concerted action, for since St. Louis has responded more liberally than any other American city to the nation's call for help, certainly she should be equal to the task of providing for her own imperative needs. Quite naturally, therefore, we turned to that former St. Louisan whose rank in the field of literature and letters is well known—Mr. Winston Churchill. We take this opportunity, therefore, to express our appreciation of Mr. Churchill's ready response to our request for an introductory statement. Its striking appeal, we believe, will find a response in other cities whose onward march in the field of municipal progress should be quickened and inspired in the light of their present opportunities.

It is with a sense of satisfaction and pleasure that we present herewith our report on "St. Louis After the War," for the consideration of your honorable body.

Respectfully submitted,

LOUIS P. ALOE,
President, Board of Aldermen.
E. R. KINSEY,
President, Board of Public Service.
CHAS. M. TALBERT,
Director, Streets and Sewers.
NELSON CUNLIFF,
Comr., Parks and Recreation.
JAMES N. McKELVEY,
Building Commissioner.
Ex-Officio Members

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW,
Engineer.
BURTON BUNCH,
Secretary.

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Vice-Chairman.
W. F. CARTER,
W. H. FUCHS,
C. E. GOLTERMANN,
CLARENCE H. HOWARD,
JOHN A. OCKERSON,
EDWIN D. SMITH,
Members appointed by the Board of Public Service.

Introduction

By

Winston Churchill

I have before me, as I write, a page of a pamphlet proclaiming St. Louis as the American City. Of the seven largest cities in the United States, St. Louis, according to the statistics given here, has by far the smallest population of foreign born. Now, if this be true, one would expect the citizens of St. Louis, acting in their civic as well as in their individual capacities, to exhibit more strongly than those of any other big community the characteristics and traits of the American.

What are those characteristics and traits? Let us recognize frankly our defects as well as our virtues. The charge that we have been overimpressed by material, commercial success is by no means unfounded. Before the war there is no gainsaying that our main civic ambition was a commercial one. We did not, indeed, neglect our libraries, art museums and our parks; we had begun to set aside playgrounds for our children; and St. Louis was justly proud of the buildings that house her schools. As a sign of the quickening of this new community spirit that was to come, a splendid civic pageant may be cited. But our conception of a desirable city was chiefly utilitarian, in which the fine arts and the larger social good were sacrificed to a prosperity redounding largely in favor of the privileged and potentially privileged; a city which could give exceptional opportunities to the man born with the "business faculty." Not that the business faculty is by any means to be despised. But it is not the only quality needed in a rounded and happy community. And while commercial prosperity is essential, it can no longer have any permanence if other factors in a city's life and growth are slighted and neglected.

Our great World's Fair which marked the inauguration of the century, was largely dedicated to commercial prosperity; and hence ephemeral, although it did establish our capacity to accomplish great things and made the name St. Louis familiar throughout the world. These will both help us in carrying out greater measures in the future. With a new vision gained,

we can see now that had these millions been spent on such a social scheme as the City Plan Commission now proposes, the results would have shown substantial benefits far more enduring. We have, for instance, "turned our backs upon the noblest work of nature, the Mississippi, and left it bankrupt between its own banks." Education and vision, however, are gained through mistakes and crises; and we have today ample proof that our energy and courage are unimpaired. No one foresaw the World War—that incalculable, educating, unifying, fusing force which in four years was to accomplish more in transforming America than the normal work of fifty years. Something of the new issues, of the interdependence of man on man, of nation on nation, which are to bring about the vast social changes of the Twentieth Century had impressed themselves upon us before the war, but no one could have predicted that in less than two decades we should be pouring out our millions in a cause which must reveal to us not only what we want, but also the manner in which it shall be obtained. And how those of us who still claim association with St. Louis scanned with faith the columns of our newspapers to read with pride the response of the city to that cause. War had scarcely been declared when her quota of volunteers was overfilled and at length one out of every fourteen St. Louisans was enlisted in the Government service.

Nor was it in the "boom" spirit of local aggrandizement that our citizens oversubscribed by millions in each of the Red Cross drives, but for the suffering and starving peoples of the earth, for soldiers, too, other than our own. In this same cause and in larger proportions than those of any other city did our housewives stint and deny themselves. To other funds our subscriptions were equally liberal. But, even more significant of the aroused Americanism of our people was the readiness to lend their money to the nation and to the world in time of need. During the summer of 1918, rich and poor alike were buying nearly two million dollars worth of war saving stamps a month. The story of all our Liberty Loans is one of millions oversubscribed; while in the last two, by a triumph of organization and generosity, St. Louis led all other cities in the nation.

In this accomplishment, a tribute must be paid to the talent

for a large scale organization which is essentially an American "business" trait. But aroused now, observe, to a realization of a social idea embracing the world. What the world regards and admires as a quixotic act, our willingness to expend our energies, our talent and our treasure for an end, innocent of territorial aggrandizement, of material, commercial supremacy, has been swiftly and efficiently accomplished without undue waste by the aid of that administrative gift in our business men—a sufficient augury of the part that gift must play in the Community of the Future.

The supreme question facing our city and the country today is whether we shall be able to keep before our eyes the ideal we have gained in this war, and apply it to the reconstruction of St. Louis and of the nation. For the true issue of the war is the issue of the new century, the need of socializing and democratizing the modern industrial community. And the war must have taught the least discerning among us what may be accomplished when all elements work together for the common good.

The issue, in brief, is democracy, and democracy today has become a scientific experiment. The City Plan Commission is asking the citizens of St. Louis to inaugurate that experiment. Science must indeed be employed for the advancement of industry in behalf of commercial prosperity, but also for human contentment and human growth, without which commercial prosperity is worthless. The plan, therefore, has been drawn up by experts, and takes into account that most human of all sciences, Social Science. It calls upon St. Louis to assume leadership among other cities in the advancement of social science.

Only by forethought can the city hope to take advantage of vast commercial opportunities which the new era is to bring forth. The Plan Commission aims to take immediate and effective steps to relieve the Mississippi river, the city's greatest natural resource, from bankruptcy. The River des Peres scheme must appeal to all modern minded men who are convinced of the hopelessness of future individual effort; who know that the time has come—if the city is to prosper—to replace individual effort by community forehandedness. The development of the terminal system, the construction of new

bridges, logically follow. While without adequate sewers, water supply and scientific garbage disposal, the money for all industrial improvements will have been spent in vain.

So much for competition with other cities in industrial growth—now a community affair, and delivered into the hands of a group of trained men. But here competition ends—competition defined as an effort directed solely for material gains—and **emulation** begins. Emulation will be the keynote of the Twentieth Century and the city that neglects it will fall hopelessly behind. Other cities of America with fewer natural resources than St. Louis are beginning to be keenly alive to the fact that beauty and art, comfort, cleanliness, opportunities for rational amusements, desirable homes and surroundings for the workers and families of moderate means are also essentials. For who shall declare, even of a city, where the body ends and the soul begins?

The slum, as centuries go, is not so very old. It dates from the introduction of machinery, from the beginning of the industrial age of utilitarianism, a short-sighted philosophy sacrificing imperative needs in the life of man to what we call prosperity. Utilitarianism has been the curse of America and had it not so blinded us we should have long ago realized that the mean housing of workers, even from an economic point of view, is the worst possible long-run policy. The concerted social efforts demanded by the war, the knowledge gained that all elements of a community must stand or fall together, must emancipate us from this fallacy. And our Federal Government at once recognized that workers could not be called upon to toil for the greatest of human causes unless that cause itself were embodied in the government's dealings with them—unless they were properly housed and their lives made full. The cause for which the war was fought has now ceased with the war's end. In the future a man will not labor for a community, or remain in it, that does not see to it that the wants of his nature are fulfilled. Proper housing, the maintenance of a high standard of living must be, if not the city's task, at least the city's responsibility.

Of no less importance is the programme for adequate playgrounds and parks, and community centres for children as well as for adults. Education is indeed the cornerstone of

democracy, but education is of no avail to a feeble mind or a stunted brain, and a sound body is the first requisite of good citizenship. That the city streets as playgrounds breed disease and vice and crime is a truth needing no comment. The benefit accruing from the playgrounds already in existence must be apparent to all thoughtful citizens, and that the child of the well-to-do alone should have good air and sunlight in which to exercise and grow presupposes a continuance of the narrower view of community prosperity, of a wealth domination, economic and political, that for the future good of the social body and soul cannot be permitted to continue. And for those who cannot afford country homes the city must provide a recreation park such as that suggested by the Commission, on the bluffs of the Missouri.

It has been cynically declared that human nature does not change. But our correlated knowledge of human nature, of the mainsprings of men's actions, has increased more in the last three decades than in all the former years of the world's history put together. This is due to the great strides made in psychology, which is at the base of social science. And we are now at last in a position to apply our knowledge of the human mind to social evils that have ravaged our communities in the past; and we discover that human nature takes a terrible vengeance on the community, and on itself if certain fundamental instincts are thwarted or denied. One of man's necessities is for relaxation, recreation and amusement. This, too, must become a charge on the community, and a beginning must be made by increasing the acreage of the city parks. Moreover, what is called by psychologists, the "herd instinct" must likewise be satisfied. This instinct, gone wrong, manifests itself in mobs and riots; properly provided for in community centres, clubs and forums for the discussion of public questions, and the educational exchange of ideas, it provides for a gregarious need. In recognition of this arises the proposal of the Commission for a great community Auditorium, one which will house, not only the exhibits of commerce, serve as centre for music and even for art, but which will provide a meeting place for all the citizens to hear, and perhaps to debate as well, matters of community, national and world import.

Psychology and the new social science has brought home to us the gospel saying that man does not live by bread alone. Bread is essential, but beauty and art are equally so—if by "living" we mean more than mere existence. Nor indeed is there any good reason why commerce should be divorced from beauty and the arts. No city can be a permanently happy city in which a large proportion of the inhabitants dwell in sordid surroundings; in which, in contrast to a Portland or a Westmoreland Place, there are dreary streets to oppress and retard the spirit of man.

Little by little these streets must disappear. Even as the new social fabric of co-operation will replace the old structure of utilitarianism and individualism, so the old structure of tenements and gloomy buildings must vanish as fast as it lies within the ability of an energetic and idealistic city to cope with the task. In the plan an appropriate beginning is made by the projection of a system of boulevards, cutting through ugly districts now to be dedicated to new uses, by widening arteries already in existence; while the public buildings, civic and federal, including the auditorium—the city forum—unified in design, will for convenience and beauty be grouped in one great community centre.

The war has revealed to us, as nothing else could have done, the tremendous resources of our American communities. It has proved that we not only have vast sums of money to spend and lend, but that we are willing to spend and lend them for a purpose appealing to hearts and minds. If the war had gone on, we should have continued our giving and lending on an even greater scale than heretofore. The people of St. Louis are now called upon to give and lend for the consummation and conservation of that for which their soldiers have fought and died, the building up of a community which, in its regard for the welfare, contentment and true happiness of all, will be a leader among communities.

Sometimes the ties of early years, as well as the knowledge of the meaning and value of these ties, grow stronger with the passing of time. It has been so in my case. And this being so, I cannot doubt the answer which St. Louis will make to the call of American Reconstruction.

Winston Churchill

ST. LOUIS AFTER THE WAR

It being a function of the City Plan Commission, as provided by ordinance, to make such recommendations as will "tend to make St. Louis a greater city," the following facts and conclusions respecting future public work in St. Louis have been prepared for consideration at a time when no city which claims or aspires to greatness can afford to ignore its responsibilities. The burden of "reconstruction," the term we now choose to describe the period following the close of the war, will fall largely upon the cities—the centers of commerce and industry. What is St. Louis' responsibility in the reconstruction program?

St. Louis' Responsibility in the Reconstruction Period

In accordance with the executive order issued by the President of the United States on May 11, 1918, the National Research Council, through its committee on reconstruction, is making a study of after-war or reconstruction problems. This committee has defined "reconstruction" as "the rebuilding on normal peace lines of the activities, mental and physical, with such improvement or advance in ideals, methods and machinery as may have been made possible by recent experience. It begins primarily with the returning soldier, in his rehabilitation if necessary, and his return to the industry which best suits his capacities and desires. It includes the placing of other war workers as conditions change and of any human effort where it may be most effective. It means better use of our natural resources in lands, minerals, waters and forests, to furnish larger and more nearly equal opportunities for each citizen and the placing of industry, including agriculture, mining and transportation, on a basis to meet the changed needs of the country. **In short, it means the intelligent planning and execution of plans for a better community.** The scope of research is defined as research for reconstruction

which should touch upon all lines of science and **especially their application to the public welfare."**

St. Louis, then, should plan and EXECUTE plans for the betterment of the community. But what kind of plans shall they be? Certainly, we would not wish to execute plans for the mere pleasure of expending money or which will not of themselves produce a return in money or in conservation or preservation of life. The above definition of reconstruction gives the answer quite clearly. Could anything be more distinctly a "better use of our natural resources in . . . waters" than the development of our riverfront for industrial and transportation purposes, for instance? Could anything be more in the interest of public welfare than the building of much needed sewers and a new waterworks, when conditions justify their construction? Or, taking the rehabilitation of the returning soldier as a first essential and assuming a temporary period of industrial inactivity, which is at least possible, would not the execution of the River des Peres Plan furnish welcome temporary employment to hundreds if not thousands of returning soldiers already experienced in large works of this nature involving the building of bridges, railroads, sewers, grading, excavating, etc.? Certainly these are logical conclusions. Other cities are beginning to reach similar conclusions. But, to postpone for the moment, consideration of specific plans, let us consider the position of St. Louis with respect to other large cities, to the nation at large and its ability to undertake large public works.

The Opportunity of St. Louis

Previous to the Civil War, St. Louis was the metropolis of the Central West. It was the leading railroad center as well as the largest city in point of population and manufactures west of the Allegheny Mountains. Being virtually on the boundary line between North and South, and itself the scene of numerous outbreaks, the four years of comparative inactivity from 1861-1865 were sufficient to divert the channels of industry and traffic elsewhere and Chicago assumed a lead which St. Louis has never since been able to overcome. With the outbreak of the European War in 1914 industrial conditions in the United States were considerably affected and continuously so until 1917, when this country entered the war, when industrial conditions underwent the greatest revolution they have ever experienced. Disregarding the reasons, it is a well known fact that the great majority of war industries are located along or adjacent to the Atlantic seaboard. For various reasons the federal government has recently seen fit to attempt a decentralization, at least so far as new industries are concerned, but St. Louis and other mid-western cities have not secured anything like the proportion existing in the eastern cities. St. Louis and other cities of the middle west have seen their ranks of industrial workers and business men somewhat depleted because of the demand for men in the shipyards and war industries of the east. In this temporary realignment of industry some have seen, or professed to see, a further detriment to the future development of St. Louis, industrial and otherwise. But is this actually the case?

Our war industries have been more or less of a mushroom character. Unlike Germany, we have never conceived an industrialism based on the demands of war, nor do we now. It is questionable, therefore, how much of permanent benefit will accrue to eastern cities as a result of the war industries. Their very presence in some cases, will prove to be a serious after-the-war problem. Few eastern cities have had the foresight or the time to so plan for their war industrial expansion as to make of it a decided factor in the future development of those cities.

On the other hand, the war has brought out conclusively the inadequacy of eastern terminals to handle the output of the nation and certainly this nation is still more or less in its infancy from a production standpoint. The war, too, has emphasized the absurdity of our previous faith in railroads to handle economically all forms of traffic. Inland waterway development has become an economic as well as a physical necessity, and we may safely anticipate it on very nearly as great a scale as the development of the railroads in the last half of the nineteenth century. The rivers of Europe are used as extensively as the railroads. For obvious reasons America must do likewise following the war. In this respect probably no

city has greater opportunities than St. Louis, particularly if the opportunity is seized in time.

Industry is one of the prime requisites of modern civilization. America owes much of its present greatness to the master minds that have here developed many of the improved methods of industrial efficiency. The stress of the war has produced still greater advances in the science of industry. In the period of reconstruction which follows the war, science will play a greater part than ever before in the advancement of industry. One result which should inevitably follow is the stimulation of manufacturing products near the centers of production of raw materials. St. Louis, being nearer perhaps than other large cities to many of the great production centers of raw materials of the country, should, if wisely directed, become an ever greater center of manufacture and of industry. In the manufacture of cotton and woolen goods, tobacco, agricultural implements and as a grain and live stock market, St. Louis has hardly begun to attain the growth its geographical position warrants.

St. Louis now possesses a terminal system reputed to be the best in the United States, if not in the world. With the completion of the Municipal Railroad Terminal system and additional river terminals there will be unlimited opportunity for industrial expansion.

Not the least of the lessons that America is learning from the war is the importance of a high standard of living for all classes of men. Good homes and good living conditions are absolutely essential to industrial efficiency and as much to be desired as large financial returns, if not infinitely more so. First at the shipyards and now near war industrial plants throughout the country, the federal government has seen fit and necessary to provide houses for workmen and their families of a standard far better than anything ever attempted in this country before. European nations have long realized and attempted to meet this condition, and they are contemplating expenditures of billions of dollars on housing after the war. St. Louis offers opportunities for good housing and good living conditions fully as desirable as other great cities, though it has done no more than most of them to advance

these opportunities. The prevailing high wages of labor often raises the question of what will happen in the period of readjustment which follows the war. Of this we may be certain, that whether the providing of good housing conditions becomes a question of organizing national, state, municipal or private credit, the lower paid wage earners will not return to the old sullen, sordid, vitiating environment of the slums and tenements. Labor is the biggest individual factor in industry and the city which offers to the industrial wage earners the best housing conditions will be a leading industrial city, other things being equal. Conditions in the shipyards and munition plants since the war started have proved that labor cannot be attracted and held content merely by high wages. Conditions conducive to good home life and good community life are fully as important to labor. Hence the National Research Council Committee's stress on "plans for a better community." Though there may be no precedent for such action in America, there is no reason why St. Louis should not at least consider the expenditure of money for the improvement of housing conditions whether it be the construction of more desirable houses for low paid workers as was done in Toronto, or the reconstruction of unsuited or unsanitary areas as was done in London. The power of excess condemnation, if granted by the state, would serve to reduce materially the cost of any work of this character that might be undertaken.

Financial Standing of St. Louis

Comparing the financial position of St. Louis with that of the nine other largest cities of the United States, its rank in tax rate, based on estimated true value for city, state and school taxes, is ninth; in assessed valuation per capita, fifth; in total assessed value of property, ninth; in net bonded indebtedness, ninth; and in per capita bonded indebtedness, ninth. In other words St. Louis has a lower tax rate, lower assessed value of property and bonded indebtedness than all but one of the nine other large cities of the country, indicating its ability to undertake expenditures for large public works without proportionately exceeding what other cities of its size

and rank have already spent. As compared with Cleveland and Detroit, cities more nearly of the size and rank of St. Louis, this city has a total assessed value of property nearly equal to them but a tax rate of only about half that of Detroit and approximately 20 per cent less than that of Cleveland. St. Louis' total net debt is $15,776,447, as against $57,073,627 for Cleveland, for instance.

To do the work which will be necessary in St. Louis will require additional bond issues of considerable amounts. The report of the Comptroller for 1917-1918 shows that on April 1, 1918, the net outstanding debt of St. Louis was $12,159,214.11 or $20,525,785.89 less than the limit of $32,685,000.00 which is the constitutional limitation of 5 per cent of the assessed value of property—$653,700,000.00 in 1917. The present net debt will be practically all retired in the next ten years but the present authorized limit is scarcely large enough to warrant the expenditures which St. Louis must make even though the revenue producing utilities such as dock, railroads, municipal auditorium and convention hall, etc., be exempted from the 5 per cent limitation as is now the case with waterworks bonds. Philadelphia recently voted to issue $114,000,000 in bonds for public works which is indicative of what St. Louis must do if it is to keep apace of other large cities, particularly Cleveland and Detroit.

St. Louis enjoys an enviable position financially. It is one of the few large cities living within its income. Its expenses, governmental and non-governmental, are smaller than eight of the nine other large cities of the country, and its per capita cost of government is less than all of them, though this is partly to be explained by proportionately smaller receipts. Money which has been spent on public works has been well expended, however, for among the ten large cities St. Louis stands fifth in point of value of public properties. In value of public properties for various purposes St. Louis ranks fifth in charities, hospitals, etc., sixth in school buildings, eighth in recreation, fourth in water supply, sixth in markets and seventh in general government.

In advocating additional expenditure for public works, it is plainly evident that not only can St. Louis afford to meet the

cost, but that in making these improvements this city will be merely assuming its normal rank among the large cities of the country. In the last ten years no bonds have been issued for any public works except schools. For public sewers, as an instance, no bonds have been authorized since 1906, and then only $1,500,000 were issued, and the city has increased considerably over 100,000 in population since that time. The Board of Public Service estimates that the cost of public sewers to meet immediate needs, as well as those of the next ten years is $18,865,000, including River des Peres, based on present prices of construction materials, which figures will probably be reduced somewhat by the time any construction work can actually begin.

During the past few years St. Louis has been making some few permanent improvements with payments out of the current revenue, such as acquisition of a few park properties, erecting some public buildings, etc., at an annual expense in some years of approximately $1,000,000. This would be a wise policy to continue if it would produce all of the needed improvements, but it will not. This policy prevents the undertaking of public improvements as they are needed and places the burden of expense entirely upon the present generation instead of in part upon the future generation who will derive benefit therefrom.

Another handicap under which St. Louis labors, a handicap which should soon be corrected, is the requirement of the state constitution making the term of all bonds twenty years, irrespective of the life of the improvement against which the bonds are issued. If bonds were to be issued for a pavement, for instance, whose estimated life was 10 years or for a building to last 50 or 100 years, under present requirements only 20-year bonds could be issued. The life of all bonds should be made to correspond with the useful life of the improvement for which it is issued.

Industrial Position of St. Louis

While industry is essential to civic greatness, no city can long remain a successful industrial center which is not pro-

gressive in municipal work. The relation is reciprocal. St. Louis has the opportunity to become a leader among cities in both respects, though how long the opportunity will remain is questionable. Comparing the industrial situation of St. Louis with other large cities, as shown by statistics of the Bureau of the Census, we find that among the ten large cities of the country St. Louis ranks fifth in number of manufacturing plants, value of products, value added by manufacture of products, sixth in number of wage earners, wages paid and ninth in wages per individual. This rank, however, seems to be due to previous rather than recent growth for the per cent of increase for the ten largest cities from 1909 to 1914 shows St. Louis to be lowest of all in number of wage earners and next to lowest in value of products. The percentage of industrial growth of St. Louis from 1905 to 1914 as compared with that of Cleveland and Detroit is even more graphically illustrative of a needed stimulus in St. Louis.

Table Showing Percentage of Increase, 1905-1914

	No. of Mfg. Plants	No. Wage Earners	Wages	Value of Products
St. Louis	12%	03%	20%	35%
Cleveland	39%	61%	101%	105%
Detroit	49%	105%	208%	212%

Among the ten largest cities of the country for the same period St. Louis ranks only ahead of Pittsburg.

One reason for lack of great industrial increase in St. Louis during the past few years has been the shortage of cheap industrial land, particularly along the railroads. This condition would at least in part be remedied by execution of the River des Peres Plan and the extension and completion of the Municipal Terminal Railroad System. By proper development of the river front much additional industrial land can be secured. Each of these undertakings involves the expenditure of public funds for the stimulation of industrial activity, a reasonable procedure if the expenditures can be justified financially and the public interest be promoted.

Specific Public Work Needed In St. Louis

A list of the specific public work needed in St. Louis, and their estimated cost is shown in a table below. To construct or undertake many of these projects under present prices would cost considerably more, but it is assumed that prices are now abnormal and that after the war they will return reasonably close to former figures. Most of the costs shown in the accompanying table were prepared in 1916 and 1917 when it was proposed to have held a referendum on a bond issue for certain of these improvements:

Table Showing Specific Public Work Needed in St. Louis

Riverfront Improvements		$25,000,000
Additional Water Works		20,000,000
Public Buildings and Group Plan		15,000,000
River des Peres Plan		11,375,000
Park and Playground System		6,500,000
Public Sewers		5,205,000
Street Openings (City's share)		2,500,000
Bridges, Viaducts, Grade Crossing Removal (City's share)		3,192,000
Municipal Auditorium		2,500,000
Miscellaneous,		
Markets	$750,000	
Farms	700,000	
Koch Hospital	250,000	
Street Dept.	450,000	2,150,000
Garbage Disposal		550,000
Housing		.....
Transit		.....
		$93,972,000

From this table it is quite evident that under our present restrictions on bonded debt the city could not undertake the improvements that it needs. Bonds for waterworks are not in-

cluded in the bond limit so that if bonds for transit and housing, if ever any were needed, could also be exempted and the bond limit of 5 per cent on assessed valuation increased to 10 per cent, it would just about enable the city to undertake the needed work. The low total of assessed valuation in St. Louis as compared with other large cities would indicate the desirability of an increase somewhere, but any possible increase would probably not be sufficient to raise the bonded debt limit to its desired size. That St. Louis is virtually alone among the large cities in being so restricted in its debt limit is indicated by the following table of per cent of assessed value of property in outstanding bonded indebtedness compiled from the publications of the U. S. Census Bureau for 1915:

Table Showing Per Cent of Total Assessed Valuation in Present Bonded Debt

City	Per Cent
New York	15.4
Chicago	10.6
Philadelphia	5.7
St. Louis	3.4
Boston	8.1
Cleveland	8.2
Baltimore	11.7
Pittsburg	8.7
Detroit	4.1
Los Angeles	12.7

Since the date when these figures were compiled, Philadelphia has issued $114,000,000 in bonds which would substantially increase its percentage, while Cleveland and Detroit have both had additional bond issues and many cities in the list need or are considering additional issues.

Riverfront Improvements

The City Plan Commission has not yet completed and published its plans for the improvement of the riverfront, though this will be done in the next few months. Until this work is finished a definite estimate of the cost of all the projects involved is more or less difficult. The improvement of the riverfront involves several more or less distinct features, however,

whose cost can be approximated. First, terminals are or will be needed similar to that already constructed at North Market street costing in all from $3,000,000 to $5,000,000. These terminals must have ample railroad facilities and this involves the extension of the Municipal Railroad Terminal System throughout the entire riverfront, connecting with all railroads entering the city, acquisition of sites and construction of freight yards and freight houses, connection with the Municipal Bridge, all to cost probably $3,000,000. There is also the problem of reconstruction and rehabilitation of the riverfront between the two bridges, the cost of which is problematical, depending upon the character of plan adopted. Perhaps a still more important part of the riverfront problem is the reclamation of a substantial area for intensive industrial use, for the need of additional low price land in St. Louis is evident. The cost of this character of work is now problematical depending upon the character of plan adopted.

The total estimated cost of $25,000,000 is not an excessive figure when compared with the present value of waterfront improvements in other large cities as shown below:

Table Showing Value of Waterfront Property and Improvements in Various Cities

New York	$161,000,000
Philadelphia	14,622,076
Baltimore	7,230,087
New Orleans	9,063,970
Chicago	4,252,433
Portland, Oregon	2,535,741
St. Louis, N. Market Street Dock	800,000

If St. Louis expects any extensive development in river traffic it must take the iniative as the largest and most influential city on the river and the city which expects most value to accrue to it from the renewed use of the river for transportation purposes. The federal government will undoubtedly spend money to encourage river development, in fact, is now doing so but St. Louis, as the largest prospective beneficiary must do its share. Federal aid will come the more readily when the city shows an interest backed up by appro-

priations. A characteristic example of what St. Louis should do is furnished by the City of Los Angeles which IN ANTICIPATION of the completion of the Panama Canal and probable traffic resulting therefrom, drew a plan for the improvement of San Pedro Harbor totalling $40,000,000 of which sum between $15,000,000 and $20,000,000 has now been spent. Various other illustrations could be given of how New York City's municipally-owned waterfront properties are a lucrative source of annual income, of recent expenditures at Baltimore, Philadelphia, Boston and of other expenditures now being made or about to be made in various cities. In any analysis of this situation it is difficult to see how St. Louis can fail to appreciate and accept its responsibilities. Time was when riverfront development in anticipation of revival of river transportation because of existing railroad conditions, might have been more or less speculative, but the war has changed all these conditions. From this time forward waterway traffic will be as important as rail traffic and so accepted by the government and the railroads. European cities have long proved the ability of rivers no deeper than the Mississippi to carry extensive traffic.

Waterworks Extension

In the face of all that has been said and written concerning the desirability of additional waterworks facilities for St. Louis, it seems unnecessary to again repeat the existing facts, nevertheless the urgency for an extension of the waterworks facilities seems to receive but passive interest by the city at large. Perhaps only a serious accident or calamity will serve to prove the desirability of a much needed additional waterworks plant, as recommended by the Water Commissioner. The present capacity of the Chain of Rocks Plant is approximately 150,000,000 gallons per day and during the last few summers this plant has been forced to its full capacity for many consecutive days. Some years ago a study was made of the best possible source of water supply for St. Louis and as a result of that study it has been more or less conclusively proven that any additional water supply plant should not be

built in the vicinity of the Chain of Rocks but on the Missouri River near Creve Coeur Lake. Topography and other conditions will make this the most economical and most desirable method of increasing our water supply facilities. Such a plant could supply the entire southern and southwestern half of the city and greatly relieve the burden now placed upon the present plant in supplying water to remote sections in this part of the city.

Any extensive industrial development in the River des Peres Valley would at once necessitate an increase in the water supply which our present facilities are incapable of providing. The site in the River des Peres Valley given serious consideration by the Government for its prospective armor plate plant in 1917, would have been without the full water supply requirements of that plant. Inasmuch as bonds for waterworks are excluded from the present debt limit and particularly since water supply is one of the best paying of all public utilities, there seems to be little or no excuse for not authorizing the bonds needed for a new water supply plant on the Missouri River. The cost of this plant was estimated to be $20,000,000 in 1916. Its probable present cost would be in the neighborhood of $30,000,000. It is likely that by the time construction can be undertaken, prices will very nearly return to their pre-war level.

Public Buildings and Public Building Group Plan

Within the next few years St. Louis will need several new public buildings including a new court house, a municipal auditorium and convention hall and possibly a hall of records. It is also quite probable that the state as well as the federal government will see fit to erect large public buildings in St. Louis during the next few years.

The City Plan Commission has been considering a plan whereby all of these buildings could be grouped about a common center. This opportunity comes to few American cities since in most of them a majority of their public buildings have already been erected in accordance with no definite scheme. Aside from the practical advantage of having these buildings

adjoining one another so far as conduct of public affairs is concerned, there is the additional advantage to be gained in the great enhancement of improving public appearances where a group plan can be secured. European cities have spent large sums of money merely to create impressive grouping of public buildings. New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Baltimore, Denver, Seattle and other American cities are developing public building group plans. With the present City Hall and Municipal Courts Building as a nucleus, St. Louis could develop economically an impressive public building group scheme with the additional public buildings yet to be built. It is more or less difficult to estimate the cost of such a plan. The estimate of $15,000,000 contained in the previous table should probably cover the cost of acquiring much if not all of the needed land and for constructing such buildings as the city may need. Buildings which might be erected by the state, by the federal government or by semi-public institutions would be financed by them and probably in the acquisition of sites would tend materially to lessen the city's share of the cost.

River des Peres Plan

The City Plan Comission has repeatedly dwelt at so much length on the desirability of the River des Peres Plan that a reiteration scarcely seems necessary. The estimated cost contained in the foregoing table of needed public works is based on the estimates made for the sewer and channel, railroad, driveway and viaducts in 1917. This Commission confidently believes that no money that could be spent by the city of St. Louis could be more profitably invested than by carrying out the River des Peres Plan. While the city has been fortunate in avoiding flood trouble during the past two years in the River des Peres Valley, the sewage menace is becoming increasingly greater, while the lack of development in this locality still tends to prohibit the growth of the city to the southwest, which the construction of the channel and sewer, railroad, driveway and viaduct will soon overcome. The Commission estimates that within a comparatively few years the

improvements that will come in the southwestern section of the city as a result of the River des Peres Plan will soon return to the city in taxes many times the cost of that plan.

Park and Playground System

On very limited facilities St. Louis, through its Department of Parks and Recreation, has built a very successful and popular public recreation system. Because of the splendid organization of this recreation system over a period of years, St. Louis has become justly proud of it but at the same time has failed to appreciate that the facilities should be enlarged. Compared with the ten large cities of the country, St. Louis ranks lowest in number of playgrounds, eighth in value of land and equipment for recreation purposes and seventh in population per acre of parks—and not one of these large cities can be said to have a complete park and recreation system. Since the acquisition of Forest Park in 1876 the increase in park area in St. Louis has virtually been at a standstill. A few playgrounds and a few small parks have been acquired in the last few years, but their total acreage has been practically negligible when compared with the total needed to bring St. Louis to the desired mark of 150 persons per acre of park—and that acreage properly distributed.

The study of the supply and demand for public recreation facilities in St. Louis, made by the City Plan Commission, disclosed the need for at least twenty more playgrounds in districts where the population was sufficiently dense to warrant their establishment, ten new community centers, equipment for making community centers of present playgrounds, and no less than twenty-five additional neighborhood parks—a peculiar deficiency especially in the more congested sections of St. Louis. In addition to these public recreation needs St. Louis should acquire at least one or two more large parks within the city limits and some large reservations on the Meramec and Missouri River Bluffs, and in the vicinity of Creve Coeur Lake. The present large parks and the proposed reservations which could now be acquired cheaply, should then be properly connected with a system of boulevards, the whole

plan being similar to the famous Essex County Park system in New Jersey. St. Louis is especially deficient in boulevard development—the State of Missouri furnishing two cities exemplifying the two extremes of boulevard development, Kansas City and St. Louis, with St. Louis not on the creditable extreme, a condition which cannot be attributed to lack of natural advantages.

By spending $6,500,000 on public recreation St. Louis would scarcely alter its rank among the ten large cities of the country in point of value of property used for public recreation purposes, as exemplified by the following table:

Value of Land, Buildings and Equipment for Public Recreation

City	Value	Rank
New York	$681,906,046	1
Chicago	57,391,433	3
Philadelphia	32,096,959	4
St. Louis	15,178,299	8
Boston	69,611,600	2
Cleveland	29,144,766	6
Baltimore	7,317,728	10
Pittsburg	18,533,412	7
Detroit	30,294,214	5
Los Angeles	10,888,374	9

The expenditure of $6,500,000 for public recreation facilities in St. Louis as previously outlined, however, would make possible the provision of recreation service probably unequalled in any city and, incidentally, it would bring returns in the enhancement of property values and resulting taxes many times its cost.

Public Sewers

The need for additional public sewers in St. Louis has become increasingly urgent with an ever increasing population. As has been previously stated, no bonds for public sewers have been issued since 1906 and then an insufficient sum was provided. It is impossible to provide the necessary amount of money needed out of the current revenue. To attempt it would be to jeopardize the public health through long delay

and a burdensome tax on the present tax payers. The sum estimated as needed, $5,205,000, is based on pre-war costs and does not include the River des Peres sewer. The sewer now contemplated as necessary are Wherry avenue, Harlem Extension, North Baden extension, Mill Creek laterals, Rocky Branch extension, Southern Arsenal, Ferry street, additional inlets, new outlets along the Mississippi and the reconstruction of several worn out sewers in the eastern section of the city.

Street Openings

In carrying out the city plan several large street extensions and widenings will be necessary of which the city will have to assume a certain proportion of the cost. This includes the extension of Twelfth street, north and south, widening of Gravois avenue, possible widening of Olive street and other projects of similar importance but less expensive. In determining the city's share of the cost of these various street widenings and extensions it is proposed to follow a standard method of procedure to insure absolute justice to all concerned. The sum of $2,500,000 contained in the previous table of needed public works will probably prove to be sufficient, though should it amount to a somewhat larger sum in the end, the cost will be many times justified in the direct benefits to be obtained.

Bridges, Viaducts and Grade Crossing Removal

There are various bridges throughout the city such as the 14th street viaduct and Fyler avenue bridge that need replacing. At certain other places existing grade crossings must be removed either by depression or elevation of the railroad tracks. Instances of this are the Rock Island and Wabash tracks west of Kingshighway with dangerous grade crossings now existing at De Baliviere, Waterman avenue and Delmar avenue; the grade crossing at Sarah street and Wabash tracks; at Kingshighway and at Shaw avenue on the Oak Hill branch of the Iron Mountain; at Southwest avenue and Missouri Pacific; at Kingshighway and at Euclid avenue on the west belt of the Terminal Railroad; also removal of grade

crossings along the Kirkwood-Carondelet branch of the Missouri Pacific and the Oak Hill Railroad. The total cost of the various improvements of the character that are needed is in the neighborhood of $8,000,000 of which the city's share is estimated at $3,192,000.

Municipal Auditorium and Convention Hall

For several years St. Louis has been in need of a large municipal auditorium and convention hall equipped with a large and small auditorium, several smaller halls of various seating capacity, committee rooms, check rooms, a considerable amount of floor space for exhibition purposes, administrative offices, etc.

Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Kansas City, St. Paul, Milwaukee, San Francisco, Oakland, Denver and other smaller cities either have built or are about to construct municipal auditoriums or convention halls of various designs suited to meet the many needs of the community. A committee appointed by the Mayor in 1917 made a special study of the needs of St. Louis respecting such a structure. Definite recommendations as to the character and contents of such a building were made which was estimated to cost, including the site, about $2,500,000. This building could be used for various industrial and commercial exhibitions; automobile show; for grand opera purposes, pending the erection of a building designed specifically for grand opera purposes; conventions, large and small; athletic meets and political, patriotic and religious gatherings; and various other assemblages incident to life in a great city. Such a building under proper management would probably be self-supporting or very nearly so and as such its cost would be amortized within ten or fifteen years.

Miscellaneous Items

There are various other items needed by the city which can be financed only through the issuance of bonds, including the erection of a garbage reduction plant or such other method as the city may determine upon to dispose of its garbage and refuse, fireproofing the city stables, acquisition of certain material yards for the use of the Street Department, acquisition of a municipal farm, enlargement of the Koch (tuberculosis) hospital, reconstruction and erection of additional retail markets. These are all items of more or less importance and essential to good conduct of municipal affairs, though their need makes no special appeal to the imagination or to the civic spirit of the community.

Housing

As has been previously stated, it is questionable whether the city will ever be called upon to issue bonds for housing purposes, if so, they should be issued only after some more or less definite well-studied scheme which will insure a proper return to the city upon its investment. The experience of the federal government in housing at the various shipyards and municipal plants during the war insures a more intelligent method of handling the housing operations of European Governments during the war and especially as contemplated following the war, would almost place housing within the realm of a distinct governmental activity. Previous to the war London and other cities found it necessary to remove some of their slums because of the intolerable unsanitary conditions then existing and to rebuild these slums with decent houses. Until recent years the housing of low-paid wage earners has been largely a means of speculation and profiteering by individuals producing conditions which a genuine democracy can no longer tolerate. Whether houses are built in the future by the organization of national, state, municipal or private credit, it is certain that the standards of housing for the lower-paid wage earners must be improved and if the burden of providing good housing falls upon the municipality, it should be prepared to assume the responsibility.

Transit

The present transit situation in St. Louis is such that eventually the city may be called upon to undertake entire or partial financial control and operation of the transit facilities.

Certainly as the city grows and rapid transit becomes necessary, it will be more or less necessary for the city to become financially interested in the construction of the lines, as has been found to be the case in many other large American cities. To this end the city should secure legislation which will permit it to issue bonds of a sufficient amount to meet any necessities which may arise, and since transit is a public utility which should naturally be self-supporting, these bonds ought to be exempt from the percentage limit which the city may issue.

Conclusion

The foregoing facts and figures have been presented for several reasons:

First—To determine the nature of St. Louis' responsibility in the reconstruction program after the war.

Second—To show the position of St. Louis with respect to other large cities of the country in respect to character and extent of public works.

Third—To suggest the successive steps necessary for action on definite plans.

It is therefore recommended:

First—That there be prepared the necessary laws which would permit the accomplishment of public work heretofore enumerated, including constitutional amendments providing for increase in the limit of bonded indebtedness which the City of St. Louis may issue from five to ten per cent of its assessed valuation, a constitutional amendment exempting bonds issued for riverfront improvements, housing or transit purposes from inclusion in the percentage limit, for altering the terms for which bonds may be issued to correspond to the life of the improvement against which they are issued, and a constitutional amendment providing for the use of power of excess condemnation.

Second—That every effort be made by the city administration and the civic and commercial organizations of the City of St. Louis to secure the passage of these laws at the coming sessions of the Legislature.

Third—That steps be taken in anticipation of a referendum for a bond issue within the present limitations of the constitution to include the more immediate necessary projects such as the River des Peres Plan, certain public sewers, street openings and other items upon which construction work could be started at any expedient date.

While the foregoing program, particularly for the larger issue of bonds, may seem to be unduly large, such can scarcely be considered the case when compared with what other cities have undertaken. Assuming that the new program amounting to approximately $89,000,000 were now to be carried out, the total indebtedness of St. Louis would still be less than that of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia or Baltimore at the present date, and only slightly more than that of Cleveland and Pittsburg at the present time. The cost of the total program, too, is only about 50 per cent of the sum raised in St. Louis in the past year for Liberty Loans and other war work.

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